

VZCZCXYZ0020
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHML #1429/01 1650830
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 130830Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1010

UNCLAS MANILA 001429

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/EP
STATE FOR EEB/EPPD NSMITH-NISSLEY
STATE PASS EXIM, OPIC AND USTR
TREASURY FOR OASIA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [BEXP](#) [EINV](#) [ELAB](#) [ETRD](#) [KSEP](#) [SENV](#) [RP](#)
SUBJECT: NOMINATION FOR CORPORATE EXCELLENCE AWARD: DOLE
PHILIPPINES

REF: STATE 00047222

NOMINATION

¶1. Embassy Manila is pleased to nominate Dole Philippines, a subsidiary of Dole Food Company, the world's largest producer and marketer of fresh fruit, vegetables, and flowers. Dole's plantations in North and South Cotabato, Davao City, and the provinces of Bukidnon, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, and Sarangani cover about 20,000 hectares; independent farms grow produce for Dole on another 17,500 hectares.

Good Works in Impoverished and Conflict Areas

¶2. All of Dole's Philippine operations are in Mindanao, the country's poorest region, where unemployment and terrorism are most prevalent. The economic development Dole adds to the area is a welcome addition to foster prosperity and peace. Its education and infrastructure programs and adherence to high ethical standards contribute greatly to remedying the problems of this region, which is crucial to USG anti-terrorism efforts.

Good Corporate Citizenship

¶3. Dole Philippines is strongly committed to good corporate citizenship through providing extensive environmental protection and sustainability initiatives, and improving Filipinos' quality of life through education, training, and health programs. The company works closely with communities, nongovernmental organizations, employees, and other stakeholders to determine the most needed programs.

Exemplary Employment Practices

¶4. The company routinely exceeds the legally required levels for both wages and benefits for its 38,000 direct hire employees and close to 6,500 contract farmers. Dole has obtained SA8000 certification, an international standard for improving worker's conditions. Dole supports the health of its employees in many ways, including creative approaches such as holding music and dance competitions. It has constructed a 1,000-seat gymnasium that has two fitness gyms. In 2005, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo designated the company an "Outstanding Employer", a prestigious and competitive award. Dole Philippines has built the only tertiary hospital in South Cotabato for use by its employees and the community at large. Dole Philippines' independent farmers are part of the company's "Growership" program, which provides access to low-cost financing, markets, tested technology, training, and also assists in providing employment to family members and neighbors of farmers.

Provision for a Safe and Healthy Workplace

¶5. Dole trains its workers to monitor the safe use of agricultural chemicals and to correct problems on site. Workers using crop protection chemicals undergo periodic medical tests to monitor exposure to these products. Dole's quality improvement teams work to promote employee development. Dole built a two-story building equipped with all the facilities necessary for training seminars.

Responsible Environmental Stewardship and Practices -----

¶6. Dole Philippines meets the high international environmental specifications outlined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and is designated a ISO-14001 company because it meets all regulations regarding environmental management systems (i.e. labeling, performance evaluation, life cycle analysis, communication and auditing as it relates to air, water and land impacts). Dole Philippines also abides by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) "Good Agricultural Practices" standard, which includes integrated crop management, pest management, organic farming, waste management, technical assistance, worker's training, and regular audits.

¶7. Dole has planted more than 1.5 million trees in Mindanao through various programs in the last six years. The World Bank also recognized Dole's "Chairs for Trees Program" as one of the most innovative projects in the Philippines. Under the program, the company's wooden pallets are turned over to a local cooperative which converts them into furniture, which is then delivered to public schools and churches. Beneficiaries plant a tree for every 10 pesos (25 cents) worth of assistance.

¶8. The Maragusan Integrated Natural Resource Conservation and PHILIPPINES

Development Project focuses on developing capabilities of partner communities for management and conservation of resources in watershed and forest areas. The project has established a total of 13 tree nurseries, trained 85 forest guard volunteers, and conducted 16 tree-planting events.

Contribution to Economic Growth -----

¶9. Dole Philippines strives to support economic growth through livelihood programs and income augmentation activities including the "Small Farms and Marketing Program" and the "Maragusan Valley Area Resource Development Program." These programs have assisted 900 upland farming households to develop sustainable farming technology. The company also trains farmers on natural farming technology and livestock management, which supports micro and small enterprises in 35 different communities and benefits 1,000 rural households.

Contribution to Local Science and Technology -----

¶10. In 2007, Dole formed an environmental committee to work on the best technological strategies to reduce carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane, and other harmful gasses. The company also invests in research and development to support its extensive crop management program.

¶11. Dole provides ten scholarships per year to Mindanao University in agriculture and engineering, one four-year undergraduate scholarship in plant pathology, and five agricultural grants. Dole supports 57 "adopted" public schools in Mindanao through construction, teacher training, and donation of laboratory equipment, textbooks, school desks, and media equipment. In 2005, the company built the first "Hub Library" in Mindanao and donated 53,327 books.

Compliance with U.S., International and Local Laws -----

¶12. Dole maintains a strict Code of Conduct, which includes a prohibition against violating any Philippine or U.S. law. Employees must demonstrate their understanding of the Code of Conduct through an annual questionnaire and attest to compliance with the Code.

Employees can anonymously report any violations through a website or toll-free number. Dole also trains employees on U.S. laws that apply overseas, such as the Patriot Act and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. In addition, the company monitors all payment procedures to ensure compliance with these laws.

KENNEY